

NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL  
Quarterly Performance Report to USAID  
Period 30 of 40: September 20, 2005 - December 19, 2005  
POLICY AND GLOBAL AFFAIRS

*RESEARCH SUPPORT PROGRAM*  
PCE-A-00-98-00008-00

I. CURRENT STATUS

During this reporting period, emphasis has been on the four AID peer review panels review of CDR and MERC projects as well as correspondence regarding the new 43 CDR preproposals and incoming MERC preproposals. The actual peer review panels took place over a two-week period. At the conclusion of the panels, summaries were prepared of each panel, followed by summaries of each of the MERC proposals reviewed in the panels. Associated activities are described below.

- Finished locating external reviewers for the review panels, and located alternate reviewers as reviewers dropped out.
- Prepared and completed mailings for all of the panels.
- Arranged travel accommodations for panel members when necessary and prepared travel expense reports.
- Attended CDR/MERC full proposal peer review panels, recorded pertinent meeting information, such as reviewer discussion, recommendations rankings, and grades for each proposal.
- Provided necessary logistical support for the USAID panel review meetings, including copying, faxing, room setup, conference calls, and keeping contact with external reviewers and receiving information from them.
- Collected reviewer comments, scanned, edited, and prepared them according to CDR/MERC program requirements.
- Provided 17-USAID panel summary drafts for the MERC Executive Committee.
- Provided matrix of MERC Executive Committee potential reviewers at USAID for sponsor's staff.
- Prepared and mailed MERC Full Proposal packages to USAID Missions in West Bank/Gaza, Jordan, Egypt, and Morocco.
- Assembled MERC Committee Full Proposal review packages for reviewers. Began preparing meeting binders for staff.
- Continued to update PANELLIST, OYB2005, MERCFUND and FUNDED databases to reflect post-panel review additions.

- Continued to receive and process semi-annual and final reports, updating the database accordingly.
- Continued to communicate with researchers and answer appropriate questions regarding their submissions for FY2005 and FY2006.
- Updated FUNDADD database with new grant information.
- Continued to advise CDR and MERC P.I.s of approved projects on Responses to Provisos and correct practices for preparations of Budget Justifications and checked M25 response to provisos for completeness and adherence to guidelines.
- Mailed reviewer Thank You letters along with October panel results information.

## II. DISCUSSION

Over seventy-one scientists were involved in the panel review process this quarter. Each reviewed proposals and attended a full day meeting, showing the support in the scientific community for the peer review process and these programs in particular. Obtaining the necessary response to provisos from the researchers continues to require appreciable resources due in part to an apparent increase in the number and complexity of the provisos and to the additional researchers associated with the program.

## III. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

The day-to-day support activities for CDR, CAR and MERC will continue. The next quarter will have as its major activity the MERC Committee Meeting and processing of those results, including MERC full proposal results letters. Other major activities will include drafting the USAID Decision Sheets for the CDR proposals that were reviewed, the processing of the CDR27 pre-proposals, as well as the continuing summarization of semi-annual and final reports as they arrive.